

**Director's Forum Minutes
State Laboratory Institute
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm / May 10, 2006 / Room 202**

Attendees: Dina Caloggero, Sally Cheney, Paul Elvin, John Fontana, Harvey George, Mariah Grazioplene, Linda Han, Raimond Konomi, Julianne Nassif, Kathleen Nawn, Joseph Peppe, Charles Salemi, Xingtai Wang, Barbara Werner,

Excused: Peter Belanger, Alan Borne, Cheryl Gauthier, Garry Greer, Austin Nagle, Alexander Sloutsky, Sandra Smole, Marcia Stowell

Chair: Alfred DeMaria

Minutes: Kristen Pribeck

Travel Policy Update (S. Cheney)

S. Cheney distributed a document outlining and updated travel policy. The Travel Liaisons are A. Nagle (Lab Bureau) and J. Dooley (CD Bureau). K. Pribeck will be available to assist travelers and supervisors, if needed. Please contact the Travel Liaisons if you need a copy of the travel policy and documents.

Out-of-state travel documents must be completed whenever an employee travels out of Massachusetts and is traveling on work time. Overnight stays on work time within Massachusetts requires a different form than out-of-state travel. Travel documents must be completed if an employee is traveling on official business or on state time even if the travel expenses are privately funded.

The traveler and supervisor/director are responsible for ensuring that the travel documents are completed accurately prior to sending them to the Travel Liaisons. The Travel Liaisons are responsible for checking the accuracy of the travel documents and obtaining the necessary approvals.

M. Izzi will approve funding sources for out-of-state travel, and will help identify funding, if necessary. There are no out-of-state travel funds on the State Lab account (4516-1000). M. Izzi will also forward LCM rules to the Budget Office. LCM rules allow staff to travel on an account other than the account that funds their salary.

S. Cheney reminded staff that when writing grants, it is important to include out-of-state meetings and conferences in the budget.

Boutlinum Toxoid Vaccine (A. DeMaria)

M. Grazioplene compiled a list of all staff who volunteered to be vaccinated with Botulinum toxoid vaccine. A. DeMaria will meet with each staff member to discuss contraindications. Staff may withdraw from the process at any time, and are not required to be vaccinated.

NEEPHLD Meeting (A. DeMaria)

Massachusetts is responsible for organizing the New England/Northeast Public Health Laboratory Director NEEPHLD Meetings for this year. A. DeMaria and Oscar Pancorbo (Department of Environmental Protection) will co-chair the meetings. A preliminary agenda for the meeting will be distributed today.

Bacterial Surveillance Laboratories (J. Fontana)

J. Fontana received a data sharing agreement developed by Brigham and Women's Hospital for a MRSA study using data generated by the SLI PulseField Laboratory, and this agreement was approved by A. DeMaria. Brigham and Women's IRB applications will be submitted to Dr. Joseph Cohen at Lemuel Shattuck Hospital for DPH review.

Bacteriology Laboratories (J. Peppe)

Two Bacteriologist positions for the STD and Pertussis Labs have closed and interviews will be conducted next week.

Environmental Chemistry (J. Nassif)

SLI received a request from the Boston Public Health Commission to perform lead and water testing for homes in the Dorchester area. J. Nassif will discuss funding options with BPHC.

PSP testing started last week, but was halted. J. Nassif is working with the DPH Food Protection Program on a better sampling strategy, as the samples tested positive by rapid screen and were confirmed by bioassay, but the toxin was below actionable level. As a cautionary measure, FPP embargoed the product and the distributor voluntarily recalled the product. The product was subsequently released. The Environmental Chemistry Lab will resume PSP testing at a later date.

Paul Jankauskas' last day at SLI is May 12. He drafted a pilot study to de-identify lead samples to search for other substances. This study would investigate whether or not elevated lead levels would be tested for other heavy metals.

Rabies Laboratory (X. Wang)

The Rabies Specimen Submission Form has been updated, approved by Quality Assurance, and posted on the SLI website. The Epidemiology Division will send the form to clinics and local boards of health.

A live skunk was delivered to SLI last week. Submitting live animals is not acceptable, and the submitter was contacted.

Arbovirus (B. Werner)

A. DeMaria, M. Grazioplene, C. Stinson, and B. Werner will meet to go over WNV and EEE Surveillance and Response Plan comments Wednesday, May 17. Clarification regarding focused aerial spraying to combat WNV is needed.

IT (D. Caloggero)

LRN Messenger 2.0 was successfully implemented on the BioWatch network, and IT staff are working to enable DPH staff to access LRN Messenger.

Enteric/PFGE IML Training will be completed this week, and the deployment date is May 23.

D. Caloggero is working with the CD Bureau to allow the Oracle database to communicate with the EIS system to report to local boards of health.

EOHHS has issued a directive stating that computers may no longer be purchased; they must be leased. D. Caloggero and M. Izzi are working to resolve budget issues regarding the leasing implementation. All Dell Optiplex GX150 units will be replaced by leased units.

The PCB application developed for the Environmental Chemistry Laboratory is complete. This application will allow staff to run algorithms automatically instead of manually calculating them.

The contract with SCI to maintain and host the WNV data application was signed; SLI will host the application starting next year.

Virology Laboratories (R. Konomi)

The Virology Laboratory continues to receive many suspect mumps clinical specimens. Massachusetts has not had one positive mumps case confirmed by culture.

Facilities (M. Grazioplene)

UMMS announced that the project to install sprinklers throughout the building has been on hold. All items that were sent to the Fernald School to be stored must be disposed of or removed by December 31, 2006. K. Pribeck will distribute a list of items to the Director's Forum staff for review.

4th Floor Training Lab (M. Grazioplene)

The WNV Hotline staff will be located in the 4th Floor Training Lab starting on Monday, May 8. Director's Forum participants concurred that Hotline staff could bring food and/or drink into the cubicle areas only on days when wet mount classes are not being held by the STD Prevention Training Center.